changing faster than at any point in human civilization and many of the effects on health will be felt. The most severe risks are to developing countries, with negative implications for the achievements of health-related Millennium Development Goals and for health equity. The first detectable changes in human health may well be alterations in geographic range and seasonality of certain infectious diseases including vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever and food-borne infections. Warmer average temperatures will be combined with increased climatic variability. Heat waves are a direct contributor to deaths from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases particularly among elderly people. High temperatures also raise the levels of ozone and air pollutants that exacerbate cardiovascular and respiratory disease and pollen and other aeroallergens that trigger asthma (IPCC, 2001). W.H.O has also drawn attention to the urgent need for generating mass-awareness on how to combat it or minimise its harmful impact and suggested several mitigation strategies which are (1) lessening of reliance on coal-fired generation of power that causes air-pollution, (2) use of active transport (bicycling and walking) (3) eating of foods that are grown locally and are lower in food chain (*e.g.* fruits, vegetables and grains). The Indian Council of Medical Research (I.C.M.R.) has constituted a Task Force on "Global Environment Change and Health", which is focussing on areas such as (i) Respiratory Diseases and Air Pollution, (ii) UV-B Cataract and (iii) Vector-Borne Diseases and Climate Change.

Decreasing number of students for medical entrances

†835. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the per capita availability of doctors in the country;

(b) whether the number of students in medical competitive examination is constantly decreasing in the country; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) As per information furnished by Medical Council of India the total number of registered allopathic doctors in country is 7,13,428. Thus the allopathic doctor population ratio at present works out to 1: 1584 approximately. In addition there are more than 6 lakhs practitioners of Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy in the country. Talking all these number together the doctor population ratio comes to 1: 860 approximately.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which conducts All India Pre Medical/Dental Entrance Examination, has informed that there is a decrease in the number of candidates registered for the examination, but the exact cause for the decrease is not known. According to CBSE, the probable cause could be revised eligibility criteria, less number of under graduate and post graduate seats in medicine, long duration of medical course, paucity of jobs, disparities in salaries *vis a vis* other professional courses.

Negligence of Doctors

836. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether a number of cases of negligence by the doctors while conducting operations in Government hospitals in Delhi/NCR have been surfaced;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken against the guilty doctors for their negligence; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to check recurrence of such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) So far the Central Government Hospitals, namely Safdarjung Hospital, Dr. R.M.L. Hospital and Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated hospitals are concerned, no incidence of negligence by doctors while conducting operations have been brought to notice.

Relaxation of regulations for new medical colleges

837. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Centre is considering relaxation of regulations for starting medical colleges, especially in areas underserved by healthcare systems;

(b) if so, whether it will be applicable to north-east region and backward States where National Rural Health Mission is operational;

(c) if so, whether country needed one lakh doctors, and only a third of this requirement was being met;

(d) whether Government was considering splitting up 25 acres into two campuses and making such a recommendation to Medical Council of India;

(e) if so, to what extent Ministry has considered theses norms; and

(f) to what extent it will help improving the status of doctors in country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (f) The Government has conveyed its decision to the Medical Council of India (MCI) to revise the norms prescribed for opening of new medical colleges in MCI Regulations on Minimum Standard Requirement for Medical colleges for 50/100/150 MBBS Admission Annually. Relaxations have been proposed in the norms for land requirement criteria for campus, bed strength, indoor occupancy for opening of medical colleges in the States where National Rural Health Mission is operational, North Eastern States, Hill States and Hilly districts in other States. For opening of new Medical Colleges in these areas the total land requirement will be 20 acres in not more than two pieces of land separated by a distance of 15 k.m. as against 25 acres prescribed for other parts of the country. The land separated by a road or canal connected with a bridge shall be treated as one piece of land for opening of Medical Colleges. The criteria relating to bed strength in the teaching hospitals at the time of starting Medical College has been relaxed to 250 beds as against the 300 beds prescribe for other parts of the country. The criteria for indoor bed occupancy in these areas as in relaxed to 60%. This will help in opening of new medical colleges in unserved and under-served areas of the country and also increase the number of medical colleges as well as production of doctors in the country.